

111TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 3254

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## AN ACT

To approve the Taos Pueblo Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2   *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

2 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the  
3 “Taos Pueblo Indian Water Rights Settlement Act”.

4 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of  
5 this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Purpose.
- Sec. 3. Definitions.
- Sec. 4. Pueblo rights.
- Sec. 5. Pueblo water infrastructure and watershed enhancement.
- Sec. 6. Taos Pueblo Water Development Fund.
- Sec. 7. Marketing.
- Sec. 8. Mutual-Benefit Projects.
- Sec. 9. San Juan-Chama Project contracts.
- Sec. 10. Authorizations, ratifications, confirmations, and conditions precedent.
- Sec. 11. Waivers and releases.
- Sec. 12. Interpretation and enforcement.
- Sec. 13. Disclaimer.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

7 The purposes of this Act are—

- 8 (1) to approve, ratify, and confirm the Taos  
9 Pueblo Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement;
- 10 (2) to authorize and direct the Secretary to exe-  
11 cute the Settlement Agreement and to perform all  
12 obligations of the Secretary under the Settlement  
13 Agreement and this Act; and
- 14 (3) to authorize all actions and appropriations  
15 necessary for the United States to meet its obliga-  
16 tions under the Settlement Agreement and this Act.

17 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

18 In this Act:

1           (1) ELIGIBLE NON-PUEBLO ENTITIES.—The  
 2           term “Eligible Non-Pueblo Entities” means the  
 3           Town of Taos, El Prado Water and Sanitation Dis-  
 4           trict (“EPWSD”), and the New Mexico Department  
 5           of Finance and Administration Local Government  
 6           Division on behalf of the Acequia Madre del Rio  
 7           Lucero y del Arroyo Seco, the Acequia Madre del  
 8           Prado, the Acequia del Monte, the Acequia Madre  
 9           del Rio Chiquito, the Upper Ranchitos Mutual Do-  
 10          mestic Water Consumers Association, the Upper Ar-  
 11          royo Hondo Mutual Domestic Water Consumers As-  
 12          sociation, and the Llano Quemado Mutual Domestic  
 13          Water Consumers Association.

14          (2) ENFORCEMENT DATE.—The term “Enforce-  
 15          ment Date” means the date upon which the Sec-  
 16          retary publishes the notice required by section  
 17          10(f)(1).

18          (3) MUTUAL-BENEFIT PROJECTS.—The term  
 19          “Mutual-Benefit Projects” means the projects de-  
 20          scribed and identified in articles 6 and 10.1 of the  
 21          Settlement Agreement.

22          (4) PARTIAL FINAL DECREE.—The term “Par-  
 23          tial Final Decree” means the Decree entered in New  
 24          Mexico v. Abeyta and New Mexico v. Arellano, Civil  
 25          Nos. 7896–BB (U.S.6 D.N.M.) and 7939–BB (U.S.

1 D.N.M.) (consolidated), for the resolution of the  
2 Pueblo's water right claims and which is substan-  
3 tially in the form agreed to by the Parties and at-  
4 tached to the Settlement Agreement as Attachment  
5 5.

6 (5) PARTIES.—The term “Parties” means the  
7 Parties to the Settlement Agreement, as identified in  
8 article 1 of the Settlement Agreement.

9 (6) PUEBLO.—The term “Pueblo” means the  
10 Taos Pueblo, a sovereign Indian tribe duly recog-  
11 nized by the United States of America.

12 (7) PUEBLO LANDS.—The term “Pueblo lands”  
13 means those lands located within the Taos Valley to  
14 which the Pueblo, or the United States in its capac-  
15 ity as trustee for the Pueblo, holds title subject to  
16 Federal law limitations on alienation. Such lands in-  
17 clude Tracts A, B, and C, the Pueblo's land grant,  
18 the Blue Lake Wilderness Area, and the Tenorio  
19 and Karavas Tracts and are generally depicted in  
20 Attachment 2 to the Settlement Agreement.

21 (8) SAN JUAN-CHAMA PROJECT.—The term  
22 “San Juan-Chama Project” means the Project au-  
23 thorized by section 8 of the Act of June 13, 1962  
24 (76 Stat. 96 and 97), and the Act of April 11, 1956  
25 (70 Stat. 105).

1           (9) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
2           the Secretary of the Interior.

3           (10) SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT.—The term  
4           “Settlement Agreement” means the contract dated  
5           March 31, 2006, between and among—

6                   (A) the United States, acting solely in its  
7                   capacity as trustee for Taos Pueblo;

8                   (B) the Taos Pueblo, on its own behalf;

9                   (C) the State of New Mexico;

10                  (D) the Taos Valley Acequia Association  
11                  and its 55 member ditches (“TVAA”);

12                  (E) the Town of Taos;

13                  (F) EPWSD; and

14                  (G) the 12 Taos area Mutual Domestic  
15                  Water Consumers Associations (“MDWCAs”),  
16                  as amended to conform with this Act.

17           (11) STATE ENGINEER.—The term “State En-  
18           gineer” means the New Mexico State Engineer.

19           (12) TAOS VALLEY.—The term “Taos Valley”  
20           means the geographic area depicted in Attachment 4  
21           of the Settlement Agreement.

22   **SEC. 4. PUEBLO RIGHTS.**

23           (a) IN GENERAL.—Those rights to which the Pueblo  
24           is entitled under the Partial Final Decree shall be held  
25           in trust by the United States on behalf of the Pueblo and

1 shall not be subject to forfeiture, abandonment, or perma-  
2 nent alienation.

3 (b) SUBSEQUENT ACT OF CONGRESS.—The Pueblo  
4 shall not be denied all or any part of its rights held in  
5 trust absent its consent unless such rights are explicitly  
6 abrogated by an Act of Congress hereafter enacted.

7 **SEC. 5. PUEBLO WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND WATER-**  
8 **SHED ENHANCEMENT.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the  
10 Commissioner of Reclamation, shall provide grants and  
11 technical assistance to the Pueblo on a nonreimbursable  
12 basis to—

13 (1) plan, permit, design, engineer, construct, re-  
14 construct, replace, or rehabilitate water production,  
15 treatment, and delivery infrastructure;

16 (2) restore, preserve, and protect the environ-  
17 ment associated with the Buffalo Pasture area; and

18 (3) protect and enhance watershed conditions.

19 (b) AVAILABILITY OF GRANTS.—Upon the Enforce-  
20 ment Date, all amounts appropriated pursuant to section  
21 10(c)(1) or made available from other authorized sources,  
22 shall be available in grants to the Pueblo after the require-  
23 ments of subsection (c) have been met.

24 (c) PLAN.—The Secretary shall provide financial as-  
25 sistance pursuant to subsection (a) upon the Pueblo's sub-

1 mital of a plan that identifies the projects to be imple-  
2 mented consistent with the purposes of this section and  
3 describes how such projects are consistent with the Settle-  
4 ment Agreement.

5 (d) EARLY FUNDS.—Notwithstanding subsection (b),  
6 \$10,000,000 of the monies authorized to be appropriated  
7 pursuant to section 10(c)(1)—

8 (1) shall be made available in grants to the  
9 Pueblo by the Secretary upon appropriation or avail-  
10 ability of the funds from other authorized sources;  
11 and

12 (2) shall be distributed by the Secretary to the  
13 Pueblo on receipt by the Secretary from the Pueblo  
14 of a written notice, a Tribal Council resolution that  
15 describes the purposes under subsection (a) for  
16 which the monies will be used, and a plan under  
17 subsection (c) for this portion of the funding.

18 **SEC. 6. TAOS PUEBLO WATER DEVELOPMENT FUND.**

19 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the  
20 Treasury of the United States a fund to be known as the  
21 “Taos Pueblo Water Development Fund” (hereinafter,  
22 “Fund”) to be used to pay or reimburse costs incurred  
23 by the Pueblo for—

24 (1) acquiring water rights;

1           (2) planning, permitting, designing, engineer-  
2           ing, constructing, reconstructing, replacing, rehabili-  
3           tating, operating, or repairing water production,  
4           treatment or delivery infrastructure, on-farm im-  
5           provements, or wastewater infrastructure;

6           (3) restoring, preserving and protecting the  
7           Buffalo Pasture, including planning, permitting, de-  
8           signing, engineering, constructing, operating, man-  
9           aging and replacing the Buffalo Pasture Recharge  
10          Project;

11          (4) administering the Pueblo's water rights ac-  
12          quisition program and water management and ad-  
13          ministration system; and

14          (5) for watershed protection and enhancement,  
15          support of agriculture, water-related Pueblo commu-  
16          nity welfare and economic development, and costs  
17          related to the negotiation, authorization, and imple-  
18          mentation of the Settlement Agreement.

19          (b) MANAGEMENT OF THE FUND.—The Secretary  
20          shall manage the Fund, invest amounts in the Fund, and  
21          make monies available from the Fund for distribution to  
22          the Pueblo consistent with the American Indian Trust  
23          Fund Management Reform Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 4001  
24          et seq.) (hereinafter, “Trust Fund Reform Act”), this Act,  
25          and the Settlement Agreement.



1       (c) INVESTMENT OF THE FUND.—Upon the Enforce-  
2   ment Date, the Secretary shall invest amounts in the  
3   Fund in accordance with—

4           (1) the Act of April 1, 1880 (21 Stat. 70, ch.  
5       41, 25 U.S.C. 161);

6           (2) the first section of the Act of June 24,  
7       1938 (52 Stat. 1037, ch. 648, 25 U.S.C. 162a); and

8           (3) the American Indian Trust Fund Manage-  
9       ment Reform Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.).

10       (d) AVAILABILITY OF AMOUNTS FROM THE FUND.—  
11   Upon the Enforcement Date, all monies deposited in the  
12   Fund pursuant to section 10(c)(2) or made available from  
13   other authorized sources shall be available to the Pueblo  
14   for expenditure or withdrawal after the requirements of  
15   subsection (e) have been met.

16       (e) EXPENDITURES AND WITHDRAWAL.—

17           (1) TRIBAL MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

18               (A) IN GENERAL.—The Pueblo may with-  
19       draw all or part of the Fund on approval by the  
20       Secretary of a tribal management plan as de-  
21       scribed in the Trust Fund Reform Act.

22               (B) REQUIREMENTS.—In addition to the  
23       requirements under the Trust Fund Reform  
24       Act, the tribal management plan shall require

1           that the Pueblo spend any funds in accordance  
2           with the purposes described in subsection (a).

3           (2) ENFORCEMENT.—The Secretary may take  
4           judicial or administrative action to enforce the re-  
5           quirement that monies withdrawn from the Fund  
6           are used for the purposes specified in subsection (a).

7           (3) LIABILITY.—If the Pueblo exercises the  
8           right to withdraw monies from the Fund, neither the  
9           Secretary nor the Secretary of the Treasury shall re-  
10          tain any liability for the expenditure or investment  
11          of the monies withdrawn.

12          (4) EXPENDITURE PLAN.—

13                (A) IN GENERAL.—The Pueblo shall sub-  
14                mit to the Secretary for approval an expendi-  
15                ture plan for any portions of the funds made  
16                available under this Act that the Pueblo does  
17                not withdraw under paragraph (1)(A).

18                (B) DESCRIPTION.—The expenditure plan  
19                shall describe the manner in which, and the  
20                purposes for which, amounts remaining in the  
21                Fund will be used.

22                (C) APPROVAL.—On receipt of an expendi-  
23                ture plan under subparagraph (A), the Sec-  
24                retary shall approve the plan if the Secretary

1 determines that the plan is reasonable and con-  
2 sistent with this Act.

3 (5) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Pueblo shall submit  
4 to the Secretary an annual report that describes all  
5 expenditures from the Fund during the year covered  
6 by the report.

7 (f) FUNDS AVAILABLE UPON APPROPRIATION.—Not-  
8 withstanding subsection (d), \$15,000,000 of the monies  
9 authorized to be appropriated pursuant to section  
10 10(c)(2)—

11 (1) shall be available upon appropriation or  
12 made available from other authorized sources for the  
13 Pueblo's acquisition of water rights pursuant to Ar-  
14 ticle 5.1.1.2.3 of the Settlement Agreement, the Buf-  
15 falo Pasture Recharge Project, implementation of  
16 the Pueblo's water rights acquisition program and  
17 water management and administration system, the  
18 design, planning, and permitting of water or waste-  
19 water infrastructure eligible for funding under sec-  
20 tion 5 or 6, or costs related to the negotiation, au-  
21 thorization, and implementation of the Settlement  
22 Agreement; and

23 (2) shall be distributed by the Secretary to the  
24 Pueblo on receipt by the Secretary from the Pueblo  
25 of a written notice and a Tribal Council resolution

1       that describes the purposes under paragraph (1) for  
2       which the monies will be used.

3       (g) NO PER CAPITA DISTRIBUTIONS.—No part of the  
4 Fund shall be distributed on a per capita basis to members  
5 of the Pueblo.

6 **SEC. 7. MARKETING.**

7       (a) PUEBLO WATER RIGHTS.—Subject to the ap-  
8 proval of the Secretary in accordance with subsection (e),  
9 the Pueblo may market water rights secured to it under  
10 the Settlement Agreement and Partial Final Decree, pro-  
11 vided that such marketing is in accordance with this sec-  
12 tion.

13       (b) PUEBLO CONTRACT RIGHTS TO SAN JUAN-  
14 CHAMA PROJECT WATER.—Subject to the approval of the  
15 Secretary in accordance with subsection (e), the Pueblo  
16 may subcontract water made available to the Pueblo under  
17 the contract authorized under section 9(b)(1)(A) to third  
18 parties to supply water for use within or without the Taos  
19 Valley, provided that the delivery obligations under such  
20 subcontract are not inconsistent with the Secretary's exist-  
21 ing San Juan-Chama Project obligations and such sub-  
22 contract is in accordance with this section.

23       (c) LIMITATION.—

24               (1) IN GENERAL.—Diversion or use of water off  
25 Pueblo lands pursuant to Pueblo water rights or

1 Pueblo contract rights to San Juan-Chama Project  
2 water shall be subject to and not inconsistent with  
3 the same requirements and conditions of State law,  
4 any applicable Federal law, and any applicable inter-  
5 state compact as apply to the exercise of water  
6 rights or contract rights to San Juan-Chama Project  
7 water held by non-Federal, non-Indian entities, in-  
8 cluding all applicable State Engineer permitting and  
9 reporting requirements.

10 (2) EFFECT ON WATER RIGHTS.—Such diver-  
11 sion or use off Pueblo lands under paragraph (1)  
12 shall not impair water rights or increase surface  
13 water depletions within the Taos Valley.

14 (d) MAXIMUM TERM.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—The maximum term of any  
16 water use lease or subcontract, including all renew-  
17 als, shall not exceed 99 years in duration.

18 (2) ALIENATION OF RIGHTS.—The Pueblo shall  
19 not permanently alienate any rights it has under the  
20 Settlement Agreement, the Partial Final Decree,  
21 and this Act.

22 (e) APPROVAL OF SECRETARY.—The Secretary shall  
23 approve or disapprove any lease or subcontract submitted  
24 by the Pueblo for approval not later than—

25 (1) 180 days after submission; or

1           (2) 60 days after compliance, if required, with  
2       section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental  
3       Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)), or any  
4       other requirement of Federal law, whichever is later,  
5       provided that no Secretarial approval shall be re-  
6       quired for any water use lease with a term of less  
7       than 7 years.

8       (f) NO FORFEITURE OR ABANDONMENT.—The non-  
9       use by a lessee or subcontractor of the Pueblo of any right  
10      to which the Pueblo is entitled under the Partial Final  
11      Decree shall in no event result in a forfeiture, abandon-  
12      ment, relinquishment, or other loss of all or any part of  
13      those rights.

14      (g) NO PREEMPTION.—

15           (1) IN GENERAL.—The approval authority of  
16      the Secretary provided under subsection (e) shall not  
17      amend, construe, supersede, or preempt any State or  
18      Federal law, interstate compact, or international  
19      treaty that pertains to the Colorado River, the Rio  
20      Grande, or any of their tributaries, including the ap-  
21      propriation, use, development, storage, regulation,  
22      allocation, conservation, exportation, or quantity of  
23      those waters.

24           (2) APPLICABLE LAW.—The provisions of sec-  
25      tion 2116 of the Revised Statutes (25 U.S.C. 177)

1       shall not apply to any water made available under  
2       the Settlement Agreement.

3       (h) NO PREJUDICE.—Nothing in this Act shall be  
4       construed to establish, address, prejudice, or prevent any  
5       party from litigating whether or to what extent any appli-  
6       cable State law, Federal law, or interstate compact does  
7       or does not permit, govern, or apply to the use of the  
8       Pueblo’s water outside of New Mexico.

9       **SEC. 8. MUTUAL-BENEFIT PROJECTS.**

10       (a) IN GENERAL.—Upon the Enforcement Date, the  
11       Secretary, acting through the Commissioner of Reclama-  
12       tion, shall provide financial assistance in the form of  
13       grants on a nonreimbursable basis to Eligible Non-Pueblo  
14       Entities to plan, permit, design, engineer, and construct  
15       the Mutual-Benefit Projects in accordance with the Settle-  
16       ment Agreement—

17               (1) to minimize adverse impacts on the Pueblo’s  
18       water resources by moving future non-Indian ground  
19       water pumping away from the Pueblo’s Buffalo Pas-  
20       ture; and

21               (2) to implement the resolution of a dispute  
22       over the allocation of certain surface water flows be-  
23       tween the Pueblo and non-Indian irrigation water  
24       right owners in the community of Arroyo Seco  
25       Arriba.

1 (b) COST-SHARING.—

2 (1) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of  
3 the total cost of planning, designing, and con-  
4 structing the Mutual-Benefit Projects authorized in  
5 subsection (a) shall be 75 percent and shall be non-  
6 reimbursable.

7 (2) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The non-Federal  
8 share of the total cost of planning, designing, and  
9 constructing the Mutual-Benefit Projects shall be 25  
10 percent and may be in the form of in-kind contribu-  
11 tions, including the contribution of any valuable  
12 asset or service that the Secretary determines would  
13 substantially contribute to completing the Mutual-  
14 Benefit Projects.

15 **SEC. 9. SAN JUAN-CHAMA PROJECT CONTRACTS.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—Contracts issued under this sec-  
17 tion shall be in accordance with this Act and the Settle-  
18 ment Agreement.

19 (b) CONTRACTS FOR SAN JUAN-CHAMA PROJECT  
20 WATER.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter  
22 into 3 repayment contracts by not later than 180  
23 days after the date of enactment of this Act, for the  
24 delivery of San Juan-Chama Project water in the  
25 following amounts:



1 (A) 2,215 acre-feet/annum to the Pueblo.

2 (B) 366 acre-feet/annum to the Town of  
3 Taos.

4 (C) 40 acre-feet/annum to EPWSD.

5 (2) REQUIREMENTS.—Each such contract shall  
6 provide that if the conditions precedent set forth in  
7 section 10(f)(2) have not been fulfilled by December  
8 31, 2016, the contract shall expire on that date.

9 (3) APPLICABLE LAW.—Public Law 87–483 (76  
10 Stat. 97) applies to the contracts entered into under  
11 paragraph (1) and no preference shall be applied as  
12 a result of section 4(a) with regard to the delivery  
13 or distribution of San Juan-Chama Project water or  
14 the management or operation of the San Juan-  
15 Chama Project.

16 (c) WAIVER.—With respect to the contract author-  
17 ized and required by subsection (b)(1)(A) and notwith-  
18 standing the provisions of Public Law 87–483 (76 Stat.  
19 96) or any other provision of law—

20 (1) the Secretary shall waive the entirety of the  
21 Pueblo’s share of the construction costs, both prin-  
22 cipal and the interest, for the San Juan-Chama  
23 Project and pursuant to that waiver, the Pueblo’s  
24 share of all construction costs for the San Juan-

1 Chama Project, inclusive of both principal and inter-  
2 est shall be nonreimbursable; and

3 (2) the Secretary's waiver of the Pueblo's share  
4 of the construction costs for the San Juan-Chama  
5 Project will not result in an increase in the pro rata  
6 shares of other San Juan-Chama Project water con-  
7 tractors, but such costs shall be absorbed by the  
8 United States Treasury or otherwise appropriated to  
9 the Department of the Interior.

10 **SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATIONS, RATIFICATIONS, CONFIRMA-**  
11 **TIONS, AND CONDITIONS PRECEDENT.**

12 (a) RATIFICATION.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except to the extent that  
14 any provision of the Settlement Agreement conflicts  
15 with any provision of this Act, the Settlement Agree-  
16 ment is authorized, ratified, and confirmed.

17 (2) AMENDMENTS.—To the extent amendments  
18 are executed to make the Settlement Agreement con-  
19 sistent with this Act, such amendments are also au-  
20 thorized, ratified, and confirmed.

21 (b) EXECUTION OF SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT.—To  
22 the extent that the Settlement Agreement does not conflict  
23 with this Act, the Secretary shall execute the Settlement  
24 Agreement, including all exhibits to the Settlement Agree-  
25 ment requiring the signature of the Secretary and any

1 amendments necessary to make the Settlement Agreement  
2 consistent with this Act, after the Pueblo has executed the  
3 Settlement Agreement and any such amendments.

4 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

5 (1) TAOS PUEBLO INFRASTRUCTURE AND WA-  
6 TERSHED FUND.—There is authorized to be appro-  
7 priated to the Secretary to provide grants pursuant  
8 to section 5, \$30,000,000, as adjusted under para-  
9 graph (4), for the period of fiscal years 2010  
10 through 2016.

11 (2) TAOS PUEBLO WATER DEVELOPMENT  
12 FUND.—There is authorized to be appropriated to  
13 the Taos Pueblo Water Development Fund, estab-  
14 lished at section 6(a), \$58,000,000, as adjusted  
15 under paragraph (4), for the period of fiscal years  
16 2010 through 2016.

17 (3) MUTUAL-BENEFIT PROJECTS FUNDING.—  
18 There is further authorized to be appropriated to the  
19 Secretary to provide grants pursuant to section 8, a  
20 total of \$33,000,000, as adjusted under paragraph  
21 (4), for the period of fiscal years 2010 through  
22 2016.

23 (4) ADJUSTMENTS TO AMOUNTS AUTHOR-  
24 IZED.—The amounts authorized to be appropriated  
25 under paragraphs (1) through (3) shall be adjusted

1 by such amounts as may be required by reason of  
2 changes since April 1, 2007, in construction costs,  
3 as indicated by engineering cost indices applicable to  
4 the types of construction or rehabilitation involved.

5 (5) DEPOSIT IN FUND.—Except for the funds  
6 to be provided to the Pueblo pursuant to section  
7 5(d), the Secretary shall deposit the funds made  
8 available pursuant to paragraphs (1) and (3) into a  
9 Taos Settlement Fund to be established within the  
10 Treasury of the United States so that such funds  
11 may be made available to the Pueblo and the Eligi-  
12 ble Non-Pueblo Entities upon the Enforcement Date  
13 as set forth in sections 5(b) and 8(a).

14 (d) AUTHORITY OF THE SECRETARY.—The Secretary  
15 is authorized to enter into such agreements and to take  
16 such measures as the Secretary may deem necessary or  
17 appropriate to fulfill the intent of the Settlement Agree-  
18 ment and this Act.

19 (e) ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE.—

20 (1) EFFECT OF EXECUTION OF SETTLEMENT  
21 AGREEMENT.—The Secretary's execution of the Set-  
22 tlement Agreement shall not constitute a major Fed-  
23 eral action under the National Environmental Policy  
24 Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

1           (2) COMPLIANCE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL  
2 LAWS.—In carrying out this Act, the Secretary shall  
3 comply with each law of the Federal Government re-  
4 lating to the protection of the environment, includ-  
5 ing—

6                   (A) the National Environmental Policy Act  
7 of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.); and

8                   (B) the Endangered Species Act of 1973  
9 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

10       (f) CONDITIONS PRECEDENT AND SECRETARIAL  
11 FINDING.—

12           (1) IN GENERAL.—Upon the fulfillment of the  
13 conditions precedent described in paragraph (2), the  
14 Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register a  
15 statement of finding that the conditions have been  
16 fulfilled.

17           (2) CONDITIONS.—The conditions precedent re-  
18 ferred to in paragraph (1) are the following:

19                   (A) The President has signed into law the  
20 Taos Pueblo Indian Water Rights Settlement  
21 Act.

22                   (B) To the extent that the Settlement  
23 Agreement conflicts with this Act, the Settle-  
24 ment Agreement has been revised to conform  
25 with this Act.

1           (C) The Settlement Agreement, so revised,  
2           including waivers and releases pursuant to sec-  
3           tion 11, has been executed by the Parties and  
4           the Secretary prior to the Parties' motion for  
5           entry of the Partial Final Decree.

6           (D) Congress has fully appropriated or the  
7           Secretary has provided from other authorized  
8           sources all funds authorized by paragraphs (1)  
9           through (3) of subsection (c) so that the entire  
10          amounts so authorized have been previously  
11          provided to the Pueblo pursuant to sections 5  
12          and 6, or placed in the Taos Pueblo Water De-  
13          velopment Fund or the Taos Settlement Fund  
14          as directed in subsection (c).

15          (E) The Legislature of the State of New  
16          Mexico has fully appropriated the funds for the  
17          State contributions as specified in the Settle-  
18          ment Agreement, and those funds have been de-  
19          posited in appropriate accounts.

20          (F) The State of New Mexico has enacted  
21          legislation that amends NMSA 1978, section  
22          72-6-3 to state that a water use due under a  
23          water right secured to the Pueblo under the  
24          Settlement Agreement or the Partial Final De-  
25          cree may be leased for a term, including all re-

1 newals, not to exceed 99 years, provided that  
2 this condition shall not be construed to require  
3 that said amendment state that any State law  
4 based water rights acquired by the Pueblo or by  
5 the United States on behalf of the Pueblo may  
6 be leased for said term.

7 (G) A Partial Final Decree that sets forth  
8 the water rights and contract rights to water to  
9 which the Pueblo is entitled under the Settle-  
10 ment Agreement and this Act and that substan-  
11 tially conforms to the Settlement Agreement  
12 and Attachment 5 thereto has been approved by  
13 the Court and has become final and nonappeal-  
14 able.

15 (g) ENFORCEMENT DATE.—The Settlement Agree-  
16 ment shall become enforceable, and the waivers and re-  
17 leases executed pursuant to section 11 and the limited  
18 waiver of sovereign immunity set forth in section 12(a)  
19 shall become effective, as of the date that the Secretary  
20 publishes the notice required by subsection (f)(1).

21 (h) EXPIRATION DATE.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—If all of the conditions  
23 precedent described in section (f)(2) have not been  
24 fulfilled by December 31, 2016, the Settlement  
25 Agreement shall be null and void, the waivers and

1 releases executed pursuant to section 11 and the  
2 sovereign immunity waivers in section 12(a) shall  
3 not become effective, and any unexpended Federal  
4 funds, together with any income earned thereon, and  
5 title to any property acquired or constructed with  
6 expended Federal funds, shall be returned to the  
7 Federal Government, unless otherwise agreed to by  
8 the Parties in writing and approved by Congress.

9 (2) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subsection  
10 (h)(1) or any other provision of law, any unexpended  
11 Federal funds, together with any income earned  
12 thereon, made available under sections 5(d) and 6(f)  
13 and title to any property acquired or constructed  
14 with expended Federal funds made available under  
15 sections 5(d) and 6(f) shall be retained by the Pueb-  
16 lo.

17 (3) RIGHT TO SET-OFF.—In the event the con-  
18 ditions precedent set forth in subsection (f)(2) have  
19 not been fulfilled by December 31, 2016, the United  
20 States shall be entitled to set off any funds expended  
21 or withdrawn from the amount appropriated pursu-  
22 ant to paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (c) or  
23 made available from other authorized sources, to-  
24 gether with any interest accrued, against any claims



1       asserted by the Pueblo against the United States re-  
2       lating to water rights in the Taos Valley.

3   **SEC. 11. WAIVERS AND RELEASES.**

4       (a) CLAIMS BY THE PUEBLO AND THE UNITED  
5   STATES.—In return for recognition of the Pueblo’s water  
6   rights and other benefits, including but not limited to the  
7   commitments by non-Pueblo parties, as set forth in the  
8   Settlement Agreement and this Act, the Pueblo, on behalf  
9   of itself and its members, and the United States acting  
10   in its capacity as trustee for the Pueblo are authorized  
11   to execute a waiver and release of claims against the par-  
12   ties to New Mexico v. Abeyta and New Mexico v. Arellano,  
13   Civil Nos. 7896–BB (U.S.6 D.N.M.) and 7939–BB (U.S.  
14   D.N.M.) (consolidated) from—

15           (1) all claims for water rights in the Taos Val-  
16       ley that the Pueblo, or the United States acting in  
17       its capacity as trustee for the Pueblo, asserted, or  
18       could have asserted, in any proceeding, including but  
19       not limited to in New Mexico v. Abeyta and New  
20       Mexico v. Arellano, Civil Nos. 7896–BB (U.S.6  
21       D.N.M.) and 7939–BB (U.S. D.N.M.) (consoli-  
22       dated), up to and including the Enforcement Date,  
23       except to the extent that such rights are recognized  
24       in the Settlement Agreement or this Act;

1           (2) all claims for water rights, whether for con-  
2       sumptive or nonconsumptive use, in the Rio Grande  
3       mainstream or its tributaries that the Pueblo, or the  
4       United States acting in its capacity as trustee for  
5       the Pueblo, asserted or could assert in any water  
6       rights adjudication proceedings except those claims  
7       based on Pueblo or United States ownership of lands  
8       or water rights acquired after the Enforcement  
9       Date, provided that nothing in this paragraph shall  
10      prevent the Pueblo or the United States from fully  
11      participating in the inter se phase of any such water  
12      rights adjudication proceedings;

13          (3) all claims for damages, losses or injuries to  
14      water rights or claims of interference with, diversion  
15      or taking of water (including but not limited to  
16      claims for injury to lands resulting from such dam-  
17      ages, losses, injuries, interference with, diversion, or  
18      taking) in the Rio Grande mainstream or its tribu-  
19      taries or for lands within the Taos Valley that ac-  
20      crued at any time up to and including the Enforce-  
21      ment Date; and

22          (4) all claims against the State of New Mexico,  
23      its agencies, or employees relating to the negotiation  
24      or the adoption of the Settlement Agreement.

1 (b) CLAIMS BY THE PUEBLO AGAINST THE UNITED  
2 STATES.—The Pueblo, on behalf of itself and its members,  
3 is authorized to execute a waiver and release of—

4 (1) all claims against the United States, its  
5 agencies, or employees relating to claims for water  
6 rights in or water of the Taos Valley that the United  
7 States acting in its capacity as trustee for the Pueb-  
8 lo asserted, or could have asserted, in any pro-  
9 ceeding, including but not limited to in New Mexico  
10 v. Abeyta and New Mexico v. Arellano, Civil Nos.  
11 7896–BB (U.S.6 D.N.M.) and 7939–BB (U.S.  
12 D.N.M.) (consolidated);

13 (2) all claims against the United States, its  
14 agencies, or employees relating to damages, losses,  
15 or injuries to water, water rights, land, or natural  
16 resources due to loss of water or water rights (in-  
17 cluding but not limited to damages, losses or injuries  
18 to hunting, fishing, gathering, or cultural rights due  
19 to loss of water or water rights, claims relating to  
20 interference with, diversion or taking of water or  
21 water rights, or claims relating to failure to protect,  
22 acquire, replace, or develop water, water rights or  
23 water infrastructure) in the Rio Grande mainstream  
24 or its tributaries or within the Taos Valley that first

1 accrued at any time up to and including the En-  
2 forcement Date;

3 (3) all claims against the United States, its  
4 agencies, or employees for an accounting of funds  
5 appropriated by the Act of March 4, 1929 (45 Stat.  
6 1562), the Act of March 4, 1931 (46 Stat. 1552),  
7 the Act of June 22, 1936 (49 Stat. 1757), the Act  
8 of August 9, 1937 (50 Stat. 564), and the Act of  
9 May 9, 1938 (52 Stat. 291), as authorized by the  
10 Pueblo Lands Act of June 7, 1924 (43 Stat. 636),  
11 and the Pueblo Lands Act of May 31, 1933 (48  
12 Stat. 108), and for breach of trust relating to funds  
13 for water replacement appropriated by said Acts  
14 that first accrued before the date of enactment of  
15 this Act;

16 (4) all claims against the United States, its  
17 agencies, or employees relating to the pending litiga-  
18 tion of claims relating to the Pueblo's water rights  
19 in New Mexico v. Abeyta and New Mexico v.  
20 Arellano, Civil Nos. 7896–BB (U.S. 6 D.N.M.) and  
21 7939–BB (U.S. D.N.M.) (consolidated); and

22 (5) all claims against the United States, its  
23 agencies, or employees relating to the negotiation,  
24 Execution or the adoption of the Settlement Agree-  
25 ment, exhibits thereto, the Final Decree, or this Act.

1       (c) RESERVATION OF RIGHTS AND RETENTION OF  
2 CLAIMS.—Notwithstanding the waivers and releases au-  
3 thorized in this Act, the Pueblo on behalf of itself and  
4 its members and the United States acting in its capacity  
5 as trustee for the Pueblo retain—

6           (1) all claims for enforcement of the Settlement  
7 Agreement, the Final Decree, including the Partial  
8 Final Decree, the San Juan-Chama Project contract  
9 between the Pueblo and the United States, or this  
10 Act;

11          (2) all claims against persons other than the  
12 Parties to the Settlement Agreement for damages,  
13 losses or injuries to water rights or claims of inter-  
14 ference with, diversion or taking of water rights (in-  
15 cluding but not limited to claims for injury to lands  
16 resulting from such damages, losses, injuries, inter-  
17 ference with, diversion, or taking of water rights)  
18 within the Taos Valley arising out of activities oc-  
19 curring outside the Taos Valley or the Taos Valley  
20 Stream System;

21          (3) all rights to use and protect water rights ac-  
22 quired after the date of enactment of this Act;

23          (4) all rights to use and protect water rights ac-  
24 quired pursuant to State law, to the extent not in-  
25 consistent with the Partial Final Decree and the

1 Settlement Agreement (including water rights for  
2 the land the Pueblo owns in Questa, New Mexico);

3 (5) all claims relating to activities affecting the  
4 quality of water including but not limited to any  
5 claims the Pueblo might have under the Comprehen-  
6 sive Environmental Response, Compensation, and  
7 Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.) (in-  
8 cluding but not limited to claims for damages to nat-  
9 ural resources), the Safe Drinking Water Act (42  
10 U.S.C. 300f et seq.), the Federal Water Pollution  
11 Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.), and the regu-  
12 lations implementing those Acts;

13 (6) all claims relating to damages, losses, or in-  
14 juries to land or natural resources not due to loss  
15 of water or water rights (including but not limited  
16 to hunting, fishing, gathering, or cultural rights);  
17 and

18 (7) all rights, remedies, privileges, immunities,  
19 powers, and claims not specifically waived and re-  
20 leased pursuant to this Act and the Settlement  
21 Agreement.

22 (d) EFFECT OF SECTION.—Nothing in the Settle-  
23 ment Agreement or this Act—

24 (1) affects the ability of the United States act-  
25 ing in its sovereign capacity to take actions author-

1        ized by law, including but not limited to any laws re-  
2        lating to health, safety, or the environment, includ-  
3        ing but not limited to the Federal Water Pollution  
4        Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.), the Safe  
5        Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.), the  
6        Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensa-  
7        tion, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601 et  
8        seq.), the Solid Waste Disposal Act (42 U.S.C. 6901  
9        et seq.), and the regulations implementing such  
10       Acts;

11            (2) affects the ability of the United States to  
12        take actions acting in its capacity as trustee for any  
13        other Indian tribe or allottee;

14            (3) confers jurisdiction on any State court to—

15                    (A) interpret Federal law regarding health,  
16        safety, or the environment or determine the du-  
17        ties of the United States or other parties pursu-  
18        ant to such Federal law; or

19                    (B) conduct judicial review of Federal  
20        agency action; or

21            (4) waives any claim of a member of the Pueblo  
22        in an individual capacity that does not derive from  
23        a right of the Pueblo.

24        (e) TOLLING OF CLAIMS.—

1           (1) IN GENERAL.—Each applicable period of  
2           limitation and time-based equitable defense relating  
3           to a claim described in this section shall be tolled for  
4           the period beginning on the date of enactment of  
5           this Act and ending on the earlier of—

6                     (A) December 31, 2016; or

7                     (B) the Enforcement Date.

8           (2) EFFECT OF SUBSECTION.—Nothing in this  
9           subsection revives any claim or tolls any period of  
10          limitation or time-based equitable defense that ex-  
11          pired before the date of enactment of this Act.

12          (3) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this subsection  
13          precludes the tolling of any period of limitations or  
14          any time-based equitable defense under any other  
15          applicable law.

16 **SEC. 12. INTERPRETATION AND ENFORCEMENT.**

17          (a) LIMITED WAIVER OF SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY.—  
18          Upon and after the Enforcement Date, if any Party to  
19          the Settlement Agreement brings an action in any court  
20          of competent jurisdiction over the subject matter relating  
21          only and directly to the interpretation or enforcement of  
22          the Settlement Agreement or this Act, and names the  
23          United States or the Pueblo as a party, then the United  
24          States, the Pueblo, or both may be added as a party to  
25          any such action, and any claim by the United States or



1 the Pueblo to sovereign immunity from the action is  
 2 waived, but only for the limited and sole purpose of such  
 3 interpretation or enforcement, and no waiver of sovereign  
 4 immunity is made for any action against the United States  
 5 or the Pueblo that seeks money damages.

6 (b) SUBJECT MATTER JURISDICTION NOT AF-  
 7 FECTED.—Nothing in this Act shall be deemed as confer-  
 8 ring, restricting, enlarging, or determining the subject  
 9 matter jurisdiction of any court, including the jurisdiction  
 10 of the court that enters the Partial Final Decree adjudi-  
 11 cating the Pueblo’s water rights.

12 (c) REGULATORY AUTHORITY NOT AFFECTED.—  
 13 Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to determine or limit  
 14 any authority of the State or the Pueblo to regulate or  
 15 administer waters or water rights now or in the future.

16 **SEC. 13. DISCLAIMER.**

17 Nothing in the Settlement Agreement or this Act  
 18 shall be construed in any way to quantify or otherwise ad-  
 19 versely affect the land and water rights, claims, or entitle-  
 20 ments to water of any other Indian tribe.

Passed the House of Representatives January 21,  
 2010.

Attest:

*Clerk.*

11TH CONGRESS  
2D Session

# H. R. 3254

## AN ACT

To approve the Taos Pueblo Indian Water Rights  
Settlement Agreement, and for other purposes.